



State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

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MAY 07 2003

May 2, 2003

Rick Black
HDR Engineering, Inc.
3995 South 700 East, Suite 100
Salt Lake City, UT 84107-2594

**Subject: Finance Docket No. 34075—Environmental Comments—Rail Line
between Levan and Salina, Utah**

Dear Mr. Black

In regards to the subject document, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources provides the following comment:

1. The UDWR has records of occurrence for several state sensitive species within two miles on either side of the proposed rail alignment (Finance Docket No. 34075). There are recent records of Toquerville Springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis kolobensis*) and a Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) winter roost site. In addition, there are historic records of Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*), Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentiles*), Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*), and Kit Fox (*Vulpes macrotis*). All of the aforementioned species are included on the *Utah Sensitive Species List*.
2. The state conservation species Columbia spotted frog (*Rana luteiventris*), exists in several known locations in Juab Valley. Alignments must consider the possibility of spotted frog presence in yet unknown locations within the valley. Surveys of wetlands and springs should be done to assess impacts to this species.
3. The state sensitive species Leatherside chub (*Gila copei*) exists in the Sevier River. Rail-line impacts to the river channel, stream banks, and riparian vegetation should be avoided or minimized when possible.
4. The proposed alignment will bisect critical and high value deer winter range for two separate herds located on the Valley Mountains and the San Pitch Mountains. Deer winter movements will conflict with the rail operations. Deer-train collisions can be expected and may result in a major source of deer mortality.
5. The wetlands along the Sevier River and Yuba Reservoir are important year-round to numerous waterfowl species. Also, these wetlands are a portion of an integrated wetland habitat that supports one of the most critical western flyways for migratory waterfowl.

6. The proposed alignment crosses Yuba Reservoir possibly affecting water quality for this Class 3 warm water fishery. Impacts to fishing recreationists and their ability to freely traverse Yuba Lake should be assessed.

Please contact our Habitat Manager, Doug Sakaguchi, or our Habitat Biologist, Gary L. Ogborn, at our Central Region Office in Springville, UT at 801-491-5678, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Douglas K. Sakaguchi in cursive script.

for; David N. Hintze
Regional Supervisor